REMARKS

This Amendment is being filed in response to the Final Office Action mailed December 14, 2007, which has been reviewed and carefully considered. Entry of the present amendment and allowance of the present application in view of the amendments made above and the remarks to follow are respectfully requested.

Claims 11-20 remain in the present application. Claims 1-10 had been cancelled without prejudice and claims 11-20 had been added.

In the Final Office Action, the specification is objected to for not including corundum power with a mean grain size $\leq 0.2\mu m$ as recited in original claim 9. In response, the specification has been amended to include this feature as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

In the Final Office Action, claims 11-14 and 16-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0125189 (Castro). Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Castro in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,417,127 (Yamamoto). Further,

claims 11-20 are rejected as allegedly unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Yamamoto. Claims 11-20 are rejected as allegedly unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over EP 1053983 (Yamamoto-EP983). It is respectfully submitted that the claims 11-20 are allowable over Castro, Yamamoto and Yamamoto-EP983 for at least the following reasons.

As correctly noted in the Final Office Action on page 4, first full paragraph; page 7, first full paragraph; and page 9, last paragraph, Castro, Yamamoto and Yamamoto-EP983 are silent about a polycrystalline alumina component which "transparent with a real in-line transmission **RIT ≥ 30%** measured over an angular aperture of at most 0.5° at a sample thickness of 0.8mm and with a single wavelength of light λ," as recited in independent claim 11, and similarly recited in independent claims 14 and 16. (Illustrative emphasis provided) It is alleged that the prior art ceramics have a similar composition to the inventive polycrystalline alumina component and thus should have similar properties and characteristics.

Applicants respectfully submit that assuming, arguendo, that the prior art ceramics have a "similar composition" as the

polycrystalline alumina component recited in independent claims 11, 14 and 16, the fact remains that the prior are ceramics are not similar enough. Castro, Yamamoto and Yamamoto-EP983 all specifically recite that their ceramics are translucent.

In particular, Castro specifically recites that "a substantial amount of the incident light should pass through the article, **albeit diffused**, to the base for reflection off of the tooth surface, ... Since the article is translucent rather than transparent ..." (Paragraph [0041], emphasis added) In addition, both Yamamoto and Yamamoto-EP983 specifically recite in the title a "**translucent** polycrystalline ceramic." (Emphasis added)

Further, as recited on page 3, lines 1-12 of the present specification, Yamamoto-EP983 discloses at best that for a "zirconia free microstructure the corresponding [RIT] value for a thickness d=0.8 mm is **25%**." (Page 3, lines 11-12 of the present specification; emphasis added) Surely, Yamamoto-EP983 would have disclosed a microstructure with an RIT of at least 30%, if the ceramic of Yamamoto-EP983 did indeed have such properties, particularly since Yamamoto-EP983 strives "to provide a **translucent** polycrystalline ceramic having a good strength and hardness, capable of **transmitting light through the ceramic**." (Yamamoto-

EP983, page 2, paragraph [0007]; emphasis added) The fact remains that the ceramics disclosed in Castro, Yamamoto and Yamamoto-EP983 are not similar enough to the polycrystalline alumina component as recited in independent claims 11, 14 and 16.

It is respectfully submitted that Castro, Yamamoto, Yamamoto-EP983, and combinations thereof, do not teach or suggest the present invention as recited in independent claim 11, and similarly recited in independent claims 14 and 16 which, amongst other patentable elements, recites (illustrative emphasis provided):

> the polycrystalline alumina component is transparent with a real in-line transmission **RIT ≥ 30%** measured over an angular aperture of at most 0.5° at a sample thickness of 0.8mm and with a single wavelength of light λ, and wherein the additive comprises Mg oxide.

A polycrystalline alumina component which is transparent with a real in-line transmission RIT ≥ 30% is nowhere taught or suggested in Castro, Yamamoto and Yamamoto-EP983, alone or in combinations. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 11, 14 and 16 should be allowable, and allowance thereof is respectfully requested. In addition, it is respectfully submitted that claims 12-13, 15 and 17-20 should also be allowed at least based on their dependence from independent claims 11, 14 and

16.

In addition, Applicants deny any statement, position or averment of the Examiner that is not specifically addressed by the foregoing argument and response. Any rejections and/or points of argument not addressed would appear to be moot in view of the presented remarks. However, the Applicants reserve the right to submit further arguments in support of the above stated position, should that become necessary. No arguments are waived and none of the Examiner's statements are conceded.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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